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ABSTRACT

The attitudes of 43 faculty members at Harcum Junior College (Pennsylvania) and of 1,069 faculty members at six diverse colleges and universities concerning student participation in academic and social policy-making are compared in this report. A majority of both faculty groups favor student participation in the formation of social regulations, though the Harcum group registers more traditional and conservative views towards, for example, students being granted sole regulatory responsibility on campus dress regulation. Both groups also favor some student participation in academic policy formulation, and this time the Harcum group's responses are comparatively more liberal. Most members of both groups disapprove of even non-voting student membership on academic policy committees. Comparing the activities and opinions of groups at Harcum and other institutions who favored an "equal-vote" membership of students on academic policy committees with those of the groups favoring a "no-role" approach reveals the following: "equal-vote" groups evidence more extra-academic contacts with students, greater political activity, and an increased concern with campus reform than do the "no-role" groups; both groups, however, are similar in that they indicate teaching as a major source of satisfaction, feel teaching effectiveness very important in evaluating instructor performance, and advocate similar teaching techniques. (JO)

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FACULTY ATTITUDES ABOUT STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY-MAKING

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FACULTY ATTITUDES ABOUT STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY-MAKING

Students have been asking not only for less restrictive rules governing their personal and social lives (Blai 1970), "but for a greater say in the formation of these rules. They have been asking not only for changes in the curriculum, but for a greater voice in planning the curriculum." (Wilson - 1969)

The purpose of this study was to present comparative evidence about the attitudes of the Harcum faculty, (some 43 responded to a recent questionnaire) and some 1,069 faculty personnel at six diverse colleges and universities; a large public university, a large state college, a medium-sized private university, a medium-sized public junior college, a small private university and a small private liberal arts college.

For convenience, their views are described under four broad classifications: A - Social Policies, B - Academic Policies, C - Educational Philosophy, and D - Other Characteristics. The numbered items appearing in the following paragraphs are the statements in the questionnaire to which the Harcum faculty responded. In all cases, percentages reported are rounded off to the nearest whole number and all percentages reported in parentheses reflect the views of the faculty members included in the 1,069 non-Harcum faculty group.

As will be noted in the paragraphs that follow, evidence about the attitudes of faculty members toward student participation in institutional policy-making and campus governance indicates that faculty all generally favorable toward student participation in the formulation of social regulations, but are generally reluctant to grant students a similar role in academic policy-making. However, the range of individual faculty opinions on both of these issues is great, and it is further noted that these opinions are related to other factors, including educational philosophy, teaching practices, types of contact with students, and their general political orientation.

A - Social Policies

1. I favor students having formal responsibility for formulating social rules and regulations. Yes 67% (66%)

Evidently about two-thirds of both samples were in favor of students having formal (assigned) responsibility for formulation of social rules and regulations.

2. I would give students an equal vote on committees in which they held membership. Yes 51% (45%)

3. I would give students sole responsibility for their own social regulations. Yes 12 % (21%)

With 62% of Harcum faculty and 66% of other faculty recommending equal student vote on committees plus sole student responsibility for their own social regulations, this may reflect a rather substantial disinclination on the part of both groups to be directly involved in matters of dormitory regulations, student discipline and student government. This evidently stems from a rather prevalent view among faculty personnel that they are primarily responsible for the intellectual life of the students, and as a consequence they typically adopt a let the students do-as-they-choose attitude toward student attitudes outside the classroom. In recent years this viewpoint has become even more prevalent as professionally trained personnel have been assigned many of the faculty's former duties in regulating student activities outside the classroom.

4. Regarding the concept of the college serving in loco parentis, I believe the college has a definite responsibility in this area. Yes 67% (29%)

Clearly the other faculty group consider the concept of in loco parentis virtually a dead issue. Not so the Harcum faculty, for a majority of the respondents favor definite responsibilities in this area.

5. Dress regulations have no place on a college campus. Yes 33% (55%)

6. I am opposed to curfews in women's dorms. Yes 12% (54%)

A majority of other faculty reported opposition to dress regulations and curfews in women's dormitories, which is quite consistent with their in loco parentis views (item 4 above). Harcum faculty are also consistent in this regard; however, they clearly opt for a more 'traditional-conservative' viewpoint. Perhaps if the 1,069 sample had included a small junior college for women in its sample of institutions, there might well have been a greater degree of similarity with Harcum's views.

7. I approve of informal student consultations regarding social policies. Yes 77% (49%)

The other faculty group clearly does not favor informal student consultations; the majority make the choice of formal responsibility (item 1 above). Harcum, however, expresses the majority view that both formal (item 1 above) and informal consultation are approved by them.

To summarize:

a) A majority of both faculty groups view favorably student participation in the formulation of social regulations.
b) The Harcum faculty are more 'traditional-conservative' in their views toward:
   (1) granting students sole responsibility for the development of social regulations
   (2) the concept of in loco parentis
   (3) dress regulations on campus, and
   (4) curfew in women's dorms

B - Academic Policies

The responses of both faculty groups to student participation in setting academic policies shows considerable variation from their social policies participation viewpoints.

8. Students should play no role in formulating academic policies.
   Yes 12% (49%)

9. I approve of informal student consultation regarding academic policies.
   Yes 80% (22%)

10. I approve of students being non-voting members of relevant academic committees to discuss academic policies. Yes 40% (38%)

Item 8 indicates that a very small segment of both groups indicate that students should play no role in formulating academic policies. Yet, for the other faculty group there is evident some reluctance (see items 9 and 10) for the professors to share their academic power. Sixty percent of them say that students should have some voice, either through being consulted informally or being permitted to sit as non-voting members on relevant academic committees. Harcum faculty, however, express a greater willingness to share with students in that 80% versus the other group 22% approve of informal student consultation.

Regarding informal student voice on academic policy making, items 11 and 12 which follow, evidence a far greater reluctance on the part of the other group to share academic policy making with students in that only 36% (items 11 and 12) would accord students a formal role - a majority (56%) of Harcum faculty are so inclined.

11. I approve of students being on relevant academic committees, having an equal vote with faculty. Yes 16% (9%)

12. I approve of students being on relevant academic committees, having a limited vote, (less than faculty). Yes 40% (27%)

To some extent faculty resistance to student involvement in academic affairs is understandable. 'Demands' for student participation in academic governance in a sense 'challenge' faculty members in their areas of professional competence. Additionally, by and large, faculties have fought hard to gain and retain power over these areas. Historically, they have striven to preserve their prerogatives from intrusions by college administrators, boards of trustees, and state governments, and so do a substantial segment of both groups wish to resist encroachment from students.

To summarize:

a) A substantial majority (88% Harcum; 94% other group) of both groups believe students should play some role in formulating academic policy.

b) Some 72% of the other group faculty are reluctant to grant even an informal student participation in academic policy making. On the other hand, Harcum faculty are more 'liberal' in this respect, since only 20% are reluctant to grant this authority to students.

c) Some 62% of the other group faculty do not approve of even non-voting student membership on academic policy committees. In the case of Harcum faculty those so inclined are 60%.

d) Regarding either limited vote or equal vote student participation (items 11 and 12), Harcum faculty again are more 'liberal' in their views.

C - Educational Philosophy

In the present-day climate of student pressures for greater power through participation, it is germane to understand more completely the thinking of both those faculty members who are supportive of student demands for participation in academic policy-making, in contrast to those who oppose such demands. These differences can be ascertained by focusing attention on some of the characteristics of the opposite-pole groups i.e. item 8, the so-called "No-Voice" group versus item 11, the so-called "Equal-Vote" group.

First, these two groups, both in the case of the Harcum sample and the other faculty sample, differ in their beliefs about the nature and goals of a college education.

See Table I

Table I - Most important goal of undergraduate education in Harcum and other groups disparate "No-Vote" and "Equal-Vote" groups

An undergraduate education should help students acquire:	"Equal-Vote"		"No-Voice"	
	Harcum	Others	Harcum	Others
1. Knowledge and skills directly applicable to their careers	22%	(7%)	40%	(32%)
2. An understanding and mastery of some specialized body of knowledge	17%	(4%)	-	(22%)
3. Preparation for further formal education	-	(1%)	-	(7%)
4. Self-knowledge and personal identity	17%	(42%)	-	(7%)
5. A broad general education	17%	(35%)	60%	(29%)
6. Knowledge of an interest in community and world problems	17%	(11%)	-	(3%)

The other faculty "Equal-Vote" group who would share their power with students evidently believe college primarily should save the expensive and self-developmental needs of students (items 4 and 5, Table I). In the case of Harcum, in which a substantial majority of program offerings are terminal and immediate-employment oriented, it is not surprising to find the most commonly selected element to be item 1, knowledge and skills acquisition. Interestingly enough, Harcum which in addition to its utilitarian-oriented programs, also offers general education - liberal arts curricula, is also well-represented in items 4 and 5.

Regarding the "No-Voice"groups, for both the Harcum and others, either very few or none chose the self-knowledge goal, preferring instead the career, (item 1) specialized knowledge (item 2) and general education (item 5) goals.

In addition the "Equal-Vote" group also expressed (among the non-Harcum sample) a more positive view of students' academic motivation and capacity for taking responsibility for their own actions. For example, 81% agreed that class attendance should be optional (see item 14 below), and 73% disagreed that without tests and grades to prod them most students would learn little. (See item 15)

In contrast, the "No-Voice" non-Harcum group held a more negative attitude on both counts; only 49% and 24% gave those answers.

14. Student class attendance should be optional.	Yes	71%	(81%)
14 a. (Same as 14 - for "No-Voice"groups)	Yes	0%	(49%)
15. Without tests and grades to prod them, most students would learn little	No	29%	(73%)
15 a. (Same as 15 - for "No-Voice"groups)	No	0%	(24%)

The "Equal-Vote" among the Harcum sample was also substantial for item 14 above, however, only 29% disagreed with item 15 above. Once again, however, the "No-Voice" group of the Harcum sample held a more negative attitude on both counts, only 0% gave those answers.

16. I support academic innovation at Harcum ("Equal-Vote groups)	Yes	100%	(76%)
16 a. (Same as 16 - for "No-Voice"groups)	Yes	100%	(41%)

More of the non-Harcum sample "Equal-Vote" group supported academic innovation. However, in the case of the Harcum sample both groups supported innovation unanimously.

17. I believe that emphasis on grades should be decreased. ("Equal-Vote" groups)	Yes	57%	(72%)
17 a. (Same as 17 - for "No-Voice"groups)	Yes	60%	(2%)

Most of the non-Harcum "Equal-Vote" group thought emphasis should be decreased as contrasted with the 2% "No-Voice" group. The Harcum samples of these two groups were practically identical (58% and 60%).

18. I believe that external control, motivation, and direction are needed for students to profit maximally from their education. ("No-Voice" group - Harcum)	Yes	100 %
18 a. (Same as 18 - for "Equal-Vote" group)	Yes	86%

Once again the "Equal-Vote" group evidences a more permissive attitude than the "No-Voice" group.

19. I value a flexible style of teaching in which I involve students as participators and discussants (Both Harcum groups) Yes 100%

The above paragraphs summarize several dimensions of the educational ideology and teaching practices of faculty who are most and least hospitable to student participation in academic policy making. As was noted in section "A" above, all faculty were markedly permissive and regulations pertaining to students' personal lives, those among the non-Harcum "Equal-Vote" group being the most permissive. This group was opposed to dress regulations and dormitory curfews for women to a vastly greater degree than their "No-Voice" colleagues. (See Table 2 below)

Table 2 - Dress Code and Curfew Views of Disparate "No-Voice" and "Equal-Vote" Groups

Viewpoint	Equal-Vote		No-Voice	
	Harcum	Others	Harcum	Others
1. Opposed to campus dress regulations	71%	85%	40%	32%
2. Opposed to curfews	30%	78%	0%	21%

As Table 2 reveals, in regard to these two social regulations, the Harcum faculty is more "traditional-conservative" in its views than the other faculty group.

Close examination of all of the above-cited components of faculty value systems reveal some interesting generalizations regarding differences and similarities. In general, faculty members who would share their power with students share an essentially positive view of the nature of students. When the "Equal-Vote" groups said that they had a positive view of student academic motivation, valued a flexible style of teaching, and involved students in their classes, they seem to be declaring faith in the ability of students to control and direct their own lives, and to be expressing confidence that students can participate constructively in determining the nature of their own education. On the other hand, in general, the faculty members who were most opposed to student participation seemed to be turning the familiar youth slogan around, saying, "Don't trust anyone under 30." Their views tend to stress the beliefs that external control, motivation, and direction are needed in order for students to profit maximally from their education.

D - Other Characteristics

As was previously noted, faculty responses to student participation are not only related to their educational philosophies and to their conceptions of

students, but also are related to other factors as well. Among others, the groups differed in amount of extra-academic contacts with students. (See Table 3 below).

Table 3 - Extra-academic contacts of "Equal-Vote" and "No-Voice" Groups

Extra-academic contacts (during past two weeks)	Equal-Vote		No-Voice	
	Harcum	Other	Harcum	Other
1. I helped a student resolve a distressing personal problem	86%	71%	60%	47%
2. I discussed a campus problem or issue with a student	100%	76%	60%	46%
3. I socialized informally with a student	71%	87%	60%	59%
4. I discussed a campus issue orproblem with at least one student	100%	76%	60%	41%
5. I discussed a campus issue or problem with at least five students	57%	21%	60%	3%
6. I saw students outside of class to discuss their academic programs and to discuss their future careers	71%	67%	60%	54%

As Table 3 reveals, without exception the "Equal-Vote" groups indicate greater extra-academic contacts with students than did their counterpart "No-Voice" group. Additionally, with the exception of informal socializing with students, (item 3, Table 3) which presumably reflects the fact that at present there is a lack of a student-faculty informal meeting-place on campus where they might gather and 'rap', as the students would say; in all other instances the Harcum groups evidenced greater participation in all six contact areas than did their counterparts in the other faculty groups. This clearly reflects the sustained higher level of student-faculty contacts which is so characteristic of Harcum.

Political orientation, as revealed by faculty attitudes toward student participation, evidence 'mixed' relations. (See Table 4 below)

Table 4 - Political orientation of "Equal-Vote" and "No-Voice" Groups

Political Orientation	Equal-Vote		No-Voice	
	Harcum	Others	Harcum	Others
1. Liberal & Very-Liberal	50%	67%	80%	12%*
2. Radical	17%	15%	-	*
3. Moderate & Conservative	33%	18%	20%	78%

* = items 1 and 2 combined

Table 2 suggests that for the other faculty group, the "Equal-Vote" group who subscribe to a 'liberal' educational policy (i.e., involving students in academic policy-making) take that stance as a specific expression of their more general view of society and life. In the case of the Harcum faculty, the exact reverse is true, more of the "No-Voice" group being liberal and very liberal than the "Equal-Vote" Harcum sub-group.

In addition, both the other faculty and Harcum faculty "Equal-Vote" groups appear to be more politically active regarding college politics. (See Table 5 below).

Table 5 - Degrees of College Political Concern of "Equal-Vote and "No-Voice" Groups

College Political Concerns	Equal-Vote		No-Voice	
	Harcum	Others	Harcum	Others
1. I discussed a campus problem or issue with a student	100%	76%	60%	46%
2. I discussed a campus problem or issue with at least five students	57%	21%	60%	30%

As Table 5 reveals, the "Equal-Vote" sub-groups are significantly greater than for the "No-Voice" sub-groups with the Harcum faculty surpassing the other faculty group in all instances. Collectively, this evidence suggests that the majority of the group actively committed to co-equal faculty-student determination of academic policies, is also concerned with campus reform, which is entirely in keeping with their expressed educational and political philosophies.

* *

To counterbalance the impression that the "Equal-Vote" and "No-Voice" groups are entirely dissimilar, the following items reflect several areas of similarity.

20. Teaching is one of the major sources of satisfaction in my life. (Equal-Vote group) Yes 100% (90%)

20 a. (Same as 20 -- for "No-Voice" group) Yes 60% (90%)

21. Effectiveness as a teacher should be very important in decisions pertaining to promotions and salary matters. (Equal-Vote group) Yes 100% (61%)

21 a. (Same as 21 - for "No-Voice group) Yes 80% (58%)

22. My classroom behavior includes the following: I describe objectives at the beginning of class, relate the course work to other fields of study, discuss points of view other than my own, mention reading references for points I make. (Equal-Vote group) Yes 100% (92%)

22 a. (Same as 22 - for "No-Voice" group) Yes (90%)

23. I do advise students when they ask for such advisement. (Equal-Vote group) Yes (95%)

23 a. (Same as 23 -- for "No-Voice" group) Yes 100% (91%)

24. I usually keep my office hours (Equal-Vote group) Yes 86% (97%)

24 a. (Same as 24 -- for "No-Voice" group) Yes 100% (96%)

In sum, both groups are composed mainly of committed and responsible teachers; as teachers, they simply differ in some of their conceptions of what effective teaching involves.

The Future

There appears to be some evidence that the attention of the student activists on college and university campuses are turning away from administrators toward the faculty and that they have met with some success in these confrontations. It is entirely likely that in the future some students will increasingly seek changes in course requirements, grading practices, and teaching methods.

Concerning these future developments, Donald Bowles (1968), then academic dean at the American University in Washington, D.C. observed, "As academic questions go, it seems unusually clear that greater student participation, as well as faculty participation, in the academic governance of a college or university should be regarded ..... as inevitable." Evidence to substantiate this viewpoint is supported by the results of a national survey by Richard Peterson (1968) which revealed an increase in the incidence of organized student protest over academic issues in the past three years, as well as Ann Heiss' (1969) conclusion that today's reform-minded students will be tomorrow's new professors.

Support for a greater student voice in academic policy-making comes from certain kinds of faculty members, (the "Equal-Vote" group), currently in the minority in this sample of collegiate institutions. These faculty members incline to the beliefs that a college education should aid students in self-development. They also tend to have more faith in students' academic

motivation and their ability to take responsibility; to involve students in the conduct of their courses; to advocate change and innovation in their colleges; and to hold relatively permissive views about the personal life of students. They are also more likely to have much contact with students outside of class; and to be both 'liberal' and relatively active in on-campus politics.

On the other hand, faculty who oppose greater student participation (the "No-Voice" group) tend to believe a college education should lead primarily to mastery of a particular body of knowledge, or to preparation for a career; to feel students need considerable direction and supervision in their studies; and to be generally satisfied with their college's current academic policies amd practices. Such faculty members (except at Harcum) report relatively little non-academic contact with students outside of class and tend to be politically moderate-conservative.

We therefore join with Wilson (1969) in concluding, "Unless student pressures abate, or unless a larger number of faculty members become willing to share their academic authority with students, conflicts over academic policies seem destined to increase. In such an event, it is the two types of faculty members sketched in this essay who will undoubtedly help to shape the course of these conflicts and thereby determine the eventual role of students in the governing of the nation's colleges and universities.

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Director of Research

May, 1970

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